DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 467 264 CG 031 883

TITLE	School Staff Burnout. A Center Quick Training Aid.
INSTITUTION	California Univ., Los Angeles. Center for Mental Health in Schools.
SPONS AGENCY	Health Resources and Services Administration (DHHS/PHS), Washington, DC. Maternal and Child Health Bureau.; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (DHHS/PHS), Rockville, MD. Center for Mental Health Services.
PUB DATE	2002-07-00
NOTE	57p.
CONTRACT	U93-MC-00175
AVAILABLE FROM	Center for Mental Health in Schools, UCLA Department of Psychology, P.O. Box 951563, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1563. For full text: http:// www.smhp.psych.ucla.edu.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom (055)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Burnout; *Educational Environment; Elementary Secondary Education; Leadership; *Mental Health; *School Personnel; Stress Variables; Well Being

ABSTRACT

It is easy to overlook the psychological needs of school staff. Yet when school staff don't feel good about themselves, it is unlikely they will be effective in making students feel good about themselves. Staff who bring a mental health and motivational perspective to schools can take a leadership role to address the problem of staff burnout. In doing so, they need to focus on both promoting well-being and addressing barriers to teaching and learning. This quick training aid presents a brief overview on the topic of staff burnout, fact sheets and practice notes, tools and handouts, a listing of model programs, and a directory of additional resources. (GCP)

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ED 467 264

Mental Health in Schools Center
Training and Technical Assistance

A Center Quick Training Aid ....

School Staff Burnout

July, 2002

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The center is co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor and operates under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project, Dept. of Psychology, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1563 Phone: (310) 825-3634.

Support comes in part from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Office of Adolescent Health, with co-funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Mental Health Services.

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Mental Health in Schools Center

Training and Technical Assistance

UCLA CENTER FOR MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS

Under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project in the Department of Psychology at UCLA, our center approaches mental health and psychosocial concerns from the broad perspective of addressing barriers to learning and promoting healthy development. Specific attention is given policies and strategies that can counter fragmentation and enhance collaboration between school and community programs.

MISSION: ***To improve outcomes for young people by enhancing policies, programs, and practices relevant to mental health in schools.***

Through collaboration, the center will

- **enhance practitioner roles, functions and competence**
- **interface with systemic reform movements to strengthen mental health in schools**
- **assist localities in building and maintaining their own infrastructure for training, support, and continuing education that fosters integration of mental health in schools**

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Support comes in part from the Office of Adolescent Health, Maternal and Child Health Bureau (Title V, Social Security Act), Health Resources and Services Administration (Project #U93 MC 00175) with co-funding from the Center for Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Both are agencies of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

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Mental Health in Schools Center — Training and Technical Assistance

About the Center's Clearinghouse

The scope of the Center's Clearinghouse reflects the School Mental Health Project's mission -- to enhance the ability of schools and their surrounding communities to address mental health and psychosocial barriers to student learning and promote healthy development. Those of you working so hard to address these concerns need ready access to resource materials. The Center's Clearinghouse is your link to specialized resources, materials, and information. The staff supplements, compiles, and disseminates resources on topics fundamental to our mission. As we identify what is available across the country, we are building systems to connect you with a wide variety of resources. Whether your focus is on an individual, a family, a classroom, a school, or a school system, we intend to be of service to you. Our evolving catalogue is available on request; and available for searching from our website.

What kinds of resources, materials, and information are available?

We can provide or direct you to a variety of resources, materials, and information that we have categorized under three areas of concern:

- Specific psychosocial problems
- Programs and processes
- System and policy concerns

Among the various ways we package resources are our *Introductory Packets, Resource Aid Packets, special reports, guidebooks*, and *continuing education units.* These encompass overview discussions of major topics, descriptions of model programs, references to publications, access information to other relevant centers, organizations, advocacy groups, and Internet links, and specific tools that can guide and assist with training activity and student/family interventions (such as outlines, checklists, instruments, and other resources that can be copied and used as information handouts and aids for practice).

Accessing the Clearinghouse

- E-mail us at smhp@ucla.edu
- FAX us at (310) 206-8716
- Phone (310) 825-3634
- Write School Mental Health Project/Center for Mental Health in Schools, Dept. of Psychology, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1563

Check out recent additions to the Clearinghouse on our Web site: http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

All materials from the Center's Clearinghouse are available for order for a minimal fee to cover the cost of copying, handling, and postage. Most materials are available for free downloading from our website.

If you know of something we should have in the clearinghouse, let us know.

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services HRSA Health Resources and Services Administration Maternal and Child Health Bureau

CMHS SAMHSA

UCLA Mental Health in Schools Center Training and Technical Assistance

The *Center for Mental Health in Schools* operates under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project at UCLA.* It is one of two *national centers* concerned with mental health in schools that are funded in part by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Adolescent Health, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration -- with co-funding from the Center for Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (Project #U93 MC 00175).

The UCLA Center approaches mental health and psychosocial concerns from the broad perspective of addressing barriers to learning and promoting healthy development. In particular, it focuses on comprehensive, multifaceted models and practices to deal with the many external and internal barriers that interfere with development, learning, and teaching. Specific attention is given policies and strategies that can counter marginalization and fragmentation of essential interventions and enhance collaboration between school and community programs. In this respect, a major emphasis is on enhancing the interface between efforts to address barriers to learning and prevailing approaches to school and community reforms.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services HRSA Health Resources and Services Administration Maternal and Child Health Bureau

CMHS Center for Mental Health Services SAMHSA Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration

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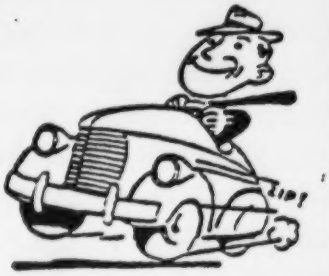

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Quick Find Responses include:

- Center Developed Resources and Tools
- Relevant Publications on the Internet
- Selected Materials from Our Clearinghouse
- A whole lot more, and if we don't have it we can find it !!!! We keep adding to and improving the center — So keep in contact!

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School Staff Burnout

Periodically, windows of opportunities arise for providing inservice at schools about mental health and psychosocial concerns, When such opportunities appear, it may be helpful to access one of more of our Center's *Quick Training Aids*.

Each of these offer a brief set of resources to guide those providing an inservice session. (They also are a form of quick self-tutorial and group discussion.)

Most encompass

- key talking points for a short training session
- a brief overview of the topic
- facts sheets
- tools
- a sampling of other related information and resources

In compiling resource material, the Center tries to identify those that represent "best practice" standards, If you know of better material, please **let us know** *so that we can make improvements.*

This set of training aids was designed for free online access and interactive learning. It can be used online and/or downloaded at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu - go to Quick Find and scroll down in the list of "Center Responses to Specific Requests" to ***Burnout***. Besides this Quick Training Aid, you also will find a wealth of other resources on this topic.

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Guide for Suggested Talking Points

I. Brief Overview

Page

A. Present main points from:
School Staff Burnout - Excerpted from *Addressing Barriers to Learning Newsletter.* Volume 7, Number 2, Spring 2002. 5

1. Use this document to highlight the intrinsically motivated origins of school staff burnout. This perspective describes the psychological mechanisms and dynamics at work within the school environment that may put school staff at risk.

2. Note the main points in the section entitled *Promoting Well-Being*, which proposes various school-based strategies for reducing staff burnout.

B. What is Job Burnout? - Selected quotes and excerpts from Job Burnout in Public Education: Symptoms, Causes, and Survival Skills, by A.J. Cedoline. 10

1. Explore the concept of "burnout," and review examples of the individual, social, and organizational scenarios within the work place which contribute to burnout.

2. Discuss the causes as outlined.

C. How Do We Deal With Burnout? - Excerpted from Maslach, C., Schaufeli, W.B., & Leiter, M.P. (2001). Job Burnout. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52: 397-422. 15

1. Contrast approaches that focus on increasing coping ability in individuals (see section on **Changing the Individual** for examples), with approaches emphasizing environmental reforms (see the section **Changing the Organization** for examples).

2. Explain implications of each approach with respect to prevention and recovery.

II. Fact Sheets & Practice Notes

- Three Stages of Burnout - Excerpted from the Continuing Medical Education website of the Texas Medical Association. (http://www.texmed.org/cme/phn/psb/burnout.asp) 18
  - Highlights the three stages and accompanying symptoms.
- Clues to Burnout - Excerpted from an Introductory Packet entitled: *Understanding and Minimizing Staff Burnout*, Center for Mental Health in Schools (2002). 19
  - Outlines the behavioral, psychological, and physical signs and symptoms of job stress which may lead to burnout.

20

- Three School-based Approaches to Minimizing Burnout - Excerpted from an Introductory Packet entitled: *Understanding and Minimizing Staff Burnout*, Center for Mental Health in Schools (2002).

    1. This information may provide a good starting point for generating discussion and ideas for intervention.
    2. Note the section entitled *Urban School Restructuring*. A more detailed description of this approach is provided through the website link entitled *Urban School Restructuring and Teacher Burnout* provided in the Models section below.

IIV. Tools & Handouts

23

A. Enhancing School Culture: Reculturing Schools - Excerpted from Peterson, K.D. (2002). Positive or negative? *Journal of Staff Development*, Summer, 23(3).

- To distribute to school staff as a stimulus for further discussion

27

B. Avoiding Burnout & Staying Healthy - Excerpted from *Teacher Tips: Avoiding Burnout & Staying Healthy*. Georgia Association of Educators Online. (http://www.gae.org/teacher/burnout.html)

- Particularly relevant for new teachers - highlights general lifestyle tips for preventing stress in preparation for and throughout the school year.

28

C. Bouncing Back from Burnout - Excerpted from Lombardi, J.D. (1990). *Do You Have Teacher Burnout.*

- Targeted to teachers - emphasis is placed on restructuring time, resources, and priorities.

IV. Model Programs

31

A. Supporting professionals-at-Risk: Evaluating Interventions to Reduce Burnout and Improve Retention of Special Educators - Excerpted from E. Cooley & P. Yovanoff (1996). Exceptional Children, Vol. 62, No. 4, pp 336-355.

- Highlight occupational stress management interventions and their effectiveness. (Provides descriptions of effective internal coping methods, as well as active problem-solving techniques).

33

B. Urban School Restructuring and Teacher Burnout - ERIC/CUE Digest, Number 75. Available online: http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed340812.html .

- Strategies calling for system-level change to prevent and reduce burnout

V. Additional Resources

37

A. QuickFind on Burnout

44

B. Selected References

C. At Risk Teachers - by Ormond Hammond & Denise Onikama, Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (1996). Available online: http://www.prel.org/products/products/atrisk-teacher.pdf.

- A review of the research literature on risk factors for teacher stress, burnout, absenteeism, and attrition. The review also proposes a model of how negative outcomes for school staff impact student learning.

V. Originals for Overheads

A. What Causes Burnout?

B. Three Stages of Burnout

C. Promoting Well-Being and Preventing Burnout

D. How Do We Deal with Burnout?

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SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT UCLA

Addressing Barriers to Learning

New ways to think . . .
Better ways to link

Mental Health in Schools Center

Volume 7, Number 2
Spring, 2002

Burnout is used to describe a syndrome that goes beyond physical fatigue from overwork. Stress and emotional exhaustion are part of it, but the hallmark of burnout is the distancing that goes on in response to the overload.

Christina Maslach

School Staff Burnout

It is easy to overlook the psychological needs of staff. Yet, when school staff don't feel good about themselves, it is unlikely they will be effective in making students feel good about themselves.

In recent months, the resource packet most often downloaded from our Center website is the one entitled: "Understanding and Minimizing Staff Burnout." These data suggest the need for greater attention to the problem. And, the end of a school year is the right time to think about how to make things better in the coming year. After reading this article, take a good look at next year's school improvement and staff development plans. If these plans don't reflect a concern for preventing burnout, now is the time to redress this oversight.

An Intrinsic Motivational Perspective of Burnout

The behavior referred to as burnout is a psychological phenomenon. One way to understand the problem is in terms of three psychological needs that theorists posit as major intrinsic motivational determinants of behavior. These are the need to *feel competent*, the need to *feel self-determining*, and the need to *feel interpersonally connected*. From this perspective, burnout can be viewed as among the negative outcomes that result when these needs are threatened and thwarted. And, such needs are regularly threatened and thwarted by the prevailing culture of schools.

"It's too hard;" "it's unfair;" "You can't win;" "No one seems to care" – all are common comments made by school staff. They are symptoms of a culture that demands a great deal and too often fails to do enough to compensate for the problems it creates. It is a culture that too often undermines motivation for too many.

Each day elementary school teachers enter a classroom to work with about 30 students. Secondary teachers multiply that by a factor of at least five. These students bring with them a wide variety of needs. And, in some classrooms, many students have become disengaged from the learning process. Upon entering the classroom, the teacher closes the door, and all present try to cope with each other and with the designated work. The day seldom goes smoothly, and many days are filled with conflict and failure.

For student support staff, the list of students referred for special assistance is so long that the reality is that appropriate services can be provided only to a small percentage. Many support personnel find it virtually impossible to live up to their professional standards.

Others who work at a school, such as front office staff, are overworked, underpaid, often unappreciated, and seldom provided with inservice training. Their dissatisfaction frequently adds another layer of negativity to the school climate.

Accountability demands and daily problems produce a sense of urgency and sometimes crisis that makes the culture of schools more reactive than proactive and more remedial than preventive. The result is a structure oriented more to enhancing external control and safety than providing caring support and guidance. This translates into authoritarian demands and social control (rules, regulations, and punishment), rather than promotion of self-direction, personal responsibility, intrinsic motivation, and well-being.

(cont. on the next page)

Do youngsters who are "turned off" reflect instances of student burnout?

Given all this, it is not surprising how many staff (and students) find themselves in situations where they chronically feel over-controlled and less than competent. They also come to believe they have little control over long-range outcomes, and this affects their hopes for the future. And, all too common is a sense of alienation from other staff, students, families, and the surrounding neighborhood. Thus, not only don't they experience feelings of competence, self-determination, and positive connection with others, such feelings tend to be undermined.

What Needs to Change

As with so many problems, it is easiest to view burnout as a personal condition. And, as in many other instances, this would be the least effective way to understand what must be done over the long-run to address the matter. The problem is multifaceted and complex. While stress-reduction activities often are prescribed, they are unlikely to be a sufficient remedy for the widespread draining of motivation. Reducing environmental stressors and enhancing job supports are more to the point, but again, alone these are insufficient strategies.

The solution requires reculturing schools in ways that minimize the undermining and maximize the enhancement of intrinsic motivation. This involves policies and practices that ensure a daily focus on (1) promoting staff and student well-being and (2) addressing barriers to teaching and learning.

Promoting Well-Being

From an intrinsic motivational perspective, a school that wants to prevent burnout needs to be experienced by staff and students as a caring, learning environment in which there is a strong collegial and social support structure and meaningful ways to participate in decision making. Four key elements here are well-designed and implemented programs for

- inducting newcomers into the school culture in welcoming and socially supportive way
- transforming working conditions by openi classroom doors and creating appropriate teams staff and students who support, nurture, and lea from each other every day
- transforming inservice training into personaliz staff development and support from first inducti into a school through ongoing capacity building
- restructuring school governance to enable shar decision-making.

****

Mother to son:
Time to get up and go to school.

Son:
I don't want to go. It's too hard and the kids don't like me.

Mother:
But you have to go – you're their teache

****

Welcoming and social support. From a psychologica perspective, learning and teaching at school ar experienced most positively when the learner wants t learn and the teacher enjoys facilitating studen learning. Each day goes best when all participants car about each other. To these ends, staff must establis a school-wide and classroom atmosphere that i welcoming, encourages mutual support and caring and contributes to a sense of community. A carin school develops and institu-tionalizes welcoming an ongoing social support programs for new staf students, and families. Such efforts can play a key rol in reducing staff burnout and also can benefit student in significant ways.

Opening the classroom door. New staff need considerable amount of support and on-the-jo training. All staff need to learn more about mobilizin and enabling learning in the classroom. Opening th classroom door is essential for enhancing the learnin of teachers, other staff, and students.

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The crux of the matter is to ensure that effective mentoring, support, teaming, and other collegial approaches are used. This includes having specialist personnel (e.g., school psychologists, counselors, special education resource teachers) mentor and demonstrate rather than play traditional consultant roles. Instead of *telling* teachers how to address student learning, behavior, and emotional problems, specialists need to be trained to go into classrooms to model and guide teachers in the use of practices for engaging and re-engaging students in learning.

In addition, teachers can do their jobs better when they integrate community resources. Anyone in the community who wants to help might make a contribution. In general, the array of people who can end the isolation of teachers in classrooms includes: (a) aides and volunteers, (b) other regular/specialist teachers, (c) family members, (d) students, (e) student support staff, (f) school administrators, (g) classified staff, (h) teachers-and other professionals-in-training, (i) school and community librarians, and more.

Personalized staff development and support. As with any learner, staff need instruction and support that is a good match for both their motivation and capabilities. This includes:

- inservice programs that account for interests, strengths, weaknesses, and limitations
- approaches that overcome avoidance motivation
- structure that provides personalized support and guidance
- instruction designed to enhance and expand intrinsic motivation for learning and problem solving.

Some staff also require additional, specialized support, guidance, and accommodations.

Personalized staff development and support may encompass programs for cooperative learning, mentoring, advocacy, counseling and mediation, human relations, and conflict resolution. Regular mentoring is essential. However, learning from colleagues is not just a talking game. It involves mentors in modeling and guiding change (e.g., demonstrating and discussing new approaches; guiding initial practice and implementation; and following-up to improve and refine). Depending on practicalities, such modeling could take place in a teacher's own classroom or be carried out in colleagues' classrooms. Some of it may take the form of team teaching. Personalized contacts increase opportunities for providing support and guidance, enhancing competence, ensuring involvement in meaningful decision-making, and attaining positive social status. All of this can productively counter alienation and burnout.

Shared governance. In any organization, who is empowered to make decisions can be a contentious issue. Putting aside the politics of this for the moment, we stress the motivational impact of not feeling empowered. There is a potent and negative impact on motivation when staff (and students and all other stakeholders) are not involved in making major decisions that affect the quality of their lives. This argues for ensuring that staff are provided with a variety of meaningful opportunities to shape such decisions. Participation on planning committees and teams that end up having little or no impact can contribute to burnout. Alternatively, feelings of self-determination that help counter burnout are more likely when governance structures share power across stakeholders and make room for their representatives around the decision-making table.

Addressing Barriers to Teaching and Learning

At some time or another, most students bring problems with them to school that affect their learning and perhaps interfere with the teacher's efforts to teach. In some geographic areas, many youngsters bring a wide range of problems stemming from restricted opportunities associated with poverty and low income, difficult and diverse family circumstances, high rates of mobility, lack of English language skills, violent neighborhoods, problems related to substance abuse, inadequate health care, and lack of enrichment opportunities. Teachers must learn many ways to enable the learning of such students. Schools must develop school-wide approaches that enable teacher effectiveness.

Too many teachers know too little about how best to support and guide students who manifest commonplace behavioral, learning, and emotional problems. In saying this, we are not teacher-bashing. We have the highest respect and empathy for anyone who pursues the call to work with young people. The problem is that teachers and student support staff are not being taught the fundamentals of how to help those youngsters who do not come to school each day motivationally ready and able to learn. Undoubtedly, this contributes in major ways to staff burnout.

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High stakes expectations, low-powered staff development. In keeping with prevailing demands for higher standards and achievement test scores, the focus of school reform and pre-service teacher training is mainly on curriculum content and instruction. Analyses indicate that implicit in most instructional reforms is a presumption that students are motivationally ready and able to absorb the lesson being taught. Recognition that the teacher must deal with some misbehavior and learning problems generally is treated as a separate matter calling for classroom management and some extra instruction.

There is a major disconnect between what teachers need to learn and what they are taught about addressing student problems – and too little is being done about it.

For the most part, pre-service teacher preparation provides little or no discussion of what to do when students are not motivationally ready and able to respond appropriately to a lesson as taught. This lapse in training is less a problem for teachers in classrooms where few students are doing poorly. In settings where large proportions are not doing well, however, and especially where many are "acting out," teachers decry the gap in their training. In such settings, one of the overriding inservice concerns is to enhance whatever a teacher has previously been taught.

Typically, schools offer a few, relatively brief sessions on various social control techniques. Examples include eye contact, physical proximity, being alert and responding quickly before a behavior escalates, using rewards as a preventive strategy, assertive discipline, and threats and other forms of punishment. All this, of course, skirts right by the matter of what is causing student misbehavior and ignores the reality that social control practices can be incompatible with enhancing student engagement with learning at school. Indeed, such practices can lead to greater student disengagement.

We hasten to stress that, in highlighting the above matters, we do not mean to minimize the importance of thorough and ongoing training related to curriculum and instruction. Every teacher must have the ability and resources to bring a sound curriculum to life and apply strategies that make learning meaningful. At the same time, however, teachers and student support staff must learn how to "enable" learning by addressing barriers to learning and teaching – especially factors leading to low or negative motivation for schooling.

Reculturing Classrooms

Think in terms of strategies to engage student interest and attention, one-to-one or small group instruction (e.g., tutoring, cooperative learning groups), enhancing protective factors, and assets building (including use of curriculum-based approaches to promote social emotional development), as well as varied forms of special assistance. All this expands definitions of good teaching to encompass practices that enable teachers to be effective with a wide range of students. From this perspective, good teaching involves fostering a caring context for learning; it encompasses development of a classroom infrastructure that transforms a big classroom into a set of smaller units; it encompasses many strategies for preventing and addressing problems as soon as they arise.

Burnout is a school-wide concern. School-wide the focus must be on ensuring development of a comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive approach to addressing barriers to learning and teaching. A widely advocated framework for appreciating the necessary range of interventions outlines a continuum consisting of

- systems for promoting healthy development and preventing problems
- systems for intervening early to address problems as soon after onset as is feasible
- systems for assisting those with chronic and severe problems.

This continuum encompasses approaches for enabling academic, social, emotional, and physical develop-ment and addressing learning, behavior, and emotional problems. Most schools and communities have some programs and services that fit along the entire continuum.

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A second framework helps to further organize fragmented approaches into a cohesive component to guide policy and program development. Such a component has been called an enabling component, a learning support component, a supportive learning environment component, or a comprehensive student support system. Within the component intervention is categorized into six arenas of activity. These are intended to capture the essence of the multifaceted ways schools work with communities to address barriers.

The six categories encompass efforts to effectively

- enhance regular classroom strategies to improve instruction for students with mild-moderate behavior and learning problems (reculturing the classroom)
- assist students and families as they negotiate the many school-related transitions
- increase home involvement with schools
- respond to, and where feasible, prevent crises
- increase community involvement and support (including enhanced use of volunteers)
- facilitate student and family access to specialized services when necessary.

Each arena for intervention is described in detail elsewhere (e.g., Adelman & Taylor, 1997; Adelman, Taylor, & Schnieder, 1999; Center for Mental Health in Schools, 2001).

All school staff need to learn an array of strategies for accommodating and helping students learn to compensate for differences, vulnerabilities, and disabilities. Teachers can learn how to use paid assistants, peer tutors, and volunteers to enhance social and academic support and work in targeted ways with youngsters who manifest problems. Strategies must be developed for using resource and itinerant teachers and other student support professionals to work closely with teachers and students *in the classroom* and on regular activities. Support staff also must play a major role in creating an infrastructure for teaming together *to develop programs* in each of an enabling component's six areas.

Concluding Comments

Anyone who works in school knows about burnout. Staggering workloads, major problems, and endless hassles are the name of the game. The many frustrations, large and small, affect staff (and student) morale and mental health. As with so many other problems, if ignored, burnout takes a severe toll. Rather than suffer through it all, staff who bring a mental health and motivational perspective to schools can take a leadership role to address the problem. In doing so, they need to focus on both promoting well-being and addressing barriers to teaching and learning. Most of all, they need to imbue school improvement strategies with an intrinsic motivational perspective.

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A Few Resources on the Internet

Reducing Occupational Stress
http://www.workhealth.org/prevention/prred.html

StressTopics
http://nimbus.ocis.temple.edu/~mlombard/StressLess/fac_staf.htm

About.com (search "Burnout")

http://www.nea.org
(search "Burnout")

B. What is Job Burnout?

1. Job Burnout

Burnout is a prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job, and is defined by the three dimensions of exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy. The past 25 years of research has established the complexity of the construct, and places the individual stress experience within a larger organizational context of people's relation to their work. Recently, the work on burnout has expanded internationally and has led to new conceptual models. The focus on engagement, the positive antithesis of burnout, promises to yield new perspectives on the interventions to alleviate burnout. The social focus of burnout, the solid research basis concerning the syndrome, and its specific ties to the work domain make a distinct and valuable contribution to people's health and well-being.

Excerpted from Maslach, C., Schaufeli, W.B., and Leiter, M.P, Annual Review of Psychology, V.52, 2001, pp.397-422.

2. Teacher Burnout

Statistical data indicate that teachers are abandoning the profession in increasing numbers. According to Shinn (1982) and Katzell, Korman, and Levine (1971), teachers are three times more likely to quit their jobs and even more likely to want to quit their jobs than are similarly trained professionals. Many are findings jobs in private industry, others are seeking early retirement, and still others are simply dropping out. Thousands of teachers have laid down their pointers and chalk largely because of because of decreased funding, limited personal control over their teaching, and lack of societal commitment.

One important factor that contributes to this trend is teacher burnout. Burnout is a more serious problem to the profession than job change or early retirement because it renders a teacher unable to cope, although he or she remains in the classroom. According to Truch (1980), teacher distress costs at least 3.5 billion annually through absenteeism, turnover, poor performance, and waste. It is estimated that one-quarter of all teachers feel burned out at any given time.

Job burnout is a problem in many professions, but it significantly more prevalent in the helping professions. Teachers, as well as administrators, counselors, doctors, nurses, police officers, and so on have the additional burden of extreme responsibility for the well being of others on top of the multitude of stressors that stem from routine job activities. This heavy responsibility combined with limited resources, long hours, marginal working conditions, and often unreasonable demands from those receiving services, lead to chronic stress, and ultimately, burnout.

Teacher Burnout in the Public Schools: Structural Causes and Consequences for Children
A.G. Dworkin. 1987. State University of New York Press.

3. Support Staff Burnout

I have heard counselors complain that they are just going through the motions of their job. They feel that whatever they are doing makes no difference at all and that they have nothing left to give. Some of these practitioners have convinced themselves that this feeling of burnout is one of the inevitable hazards of the profession and that there is not much they can do to revitalize themselves. This assumption is lethal, for it cements the feeling of impotence and leads to a giving up of hope. Equally bad are those practitioners who do not realize that they are burned out.

Burnout manifests itself in many ways. Those who experience this syndrome typically find that they are tired, drained, and without enthusiasm. They talk of feeling pulled by their many projects, most of which seem to have lost meaning. They feel that what they do have to offer is either not wanted or not received; they feel unappreciated, unrecognized, and unimportant, and they go about their jobs in a mechanical and routine way. They tend not to see any concrete results of the fruits of the efforts . Often they feel oppressed by the "system" and by institutional demands, which, they contend, stifle any sense of personal initiative. A real danger is that burnout syndrome can feed off itself, so that practitioners feel more and more isolated. They may fail to reach out to one another and to develop a support system. Because burnout can rob us of the vitality we need personally and professionally, it is important to look at some of its causes, possible remedies, and ways of preventing it.

From *Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy* (1996), by Gerald Corey

"...Burnout is used to describe a syndrome that goes beyond physical fatigue from overwork. Stress and emotional exhaustion are part of it, but the hallmark of burnout is the distancing that goes on in response to the overload..."

"The Truth About Burnout" co-author Christina maslach (Jossey-Bass, 1997, $25). Excerpted from http://paracepts.com/resources/burnout.htm A mismatch in the workplace sparks employee burnout Review of The Truth About Burnout (Christina Maslach), by Carol Smith, the Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

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Excerpts from Job Burnout in Public Education: Symptoms, Causes, and Survival Skills, which was written by Anthony J. Cedoline and published in 1982 by the Teachers College, Columbia University.

What Causes Burnout?

Job burnout is "a consequence of the perceived disparity between the demands of the job and the resources (both material and emotional) that an employee has available to him or her. When demands in the workplace are unusually high, it becomes increasingly impossible to cope with the stress associated with these working conditions."

> Its roots are found in the daily transactions stemming from the debilitating physical and emotional overload that arises from stress on the job.

Job burnout is both an occupational hazard and a phenomenon induced by distress. It is generally characterized by: (1) some degree of physical and emotional exhaustion; (2) socially dysfunctional behavior, particularly a distancing and insulation from individuals with whom one is working; (3) psychological impairment – especially strong, negative feelings toward the self; and (4) organizational inefficiency through decreased output and poor morale.

> In *Job Burnout in Public Education: Symptoms, Causes, and Survival Skills* (1982), Anthony Cedoline offers the following analysis of seven causes of job burnout that have received the most attention in research findings:

Lack of Control Over One's Destiny

> As organizations become large and impersonal, employees are frequently less involved in decision making. Even simple tasks can be delayed due to legal dictates, administrative policy, or lack of funds. Employees' participation in decision making promotes more positive job attitudes and greater motivation for effective performance.

Lack of Occupational Feedback and Communication

> Like other workers, educators want to know the expectations of the organization, the behaviors that will be successful or unsuccessful in satisfying job requirements, any physical and psychological dangers that might exist, and the security of the job. Education employees need feedback to develop job values, aspirations, objectives, and accomplishments. Lack of clear, consistent information can result in distress. If evaluation only happens once or twice a year without regular, periodic feedback, the possibility of stress increases the longer the employee works in a vacuum. Regarding communication, organizational structures that foster open, honest, cathartic expression in a positive and constructive way reap large dividends from employees. When management reacts to open communication on a crisis basis only, it reinforces negative communications.

Work Overload or Underload

> Researchers have found high levels of stress among individuals who have excessive work loads. Long or unpredictable hours, too many responsibilities, work at a too-rapid pace, too many phone calls, dealing directly with difficult people without sufficient relief, dealing with constant crises, and supervising too many people (e.g., large class sizes and overcrowding) or having broad multifaceted job descriptions are characteristics of a work overload. In addition, boring tedious jobs or jobs without variety are equally distressful.

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Contact Overload

Contact overload results from the necessity for frequent encounters with other people in order to carry out job functions. Some occupations (teaching, counseling, law enforcement) require many encounters that are unpleasant and therefore distressful. These workers spend a large proportion of their work time interacting with people in various states of distress. When the caseload is high, control over one's work and consequent job satisfaction is affected. Contact overloads also leave little occasion or energy for communication and support from other employees or for seeking personal and professional growth opportunities.

Role Conflict/Ambiguity

Although role conflict and ambiguity can occur independently, they both refer to the uncertainty about what one is expected to do at work. Role conflict may be defined as the simultaneous occurrence of two or more opposing pressures such that a response to one makes compliance with the other impossible (e.g., mass education versus individualized instruction). The most frequent role conflicts are (1) those between the individual's values and those of the superior or the organization; (2) the conflict between the demands of the work place and the worker's personal life; and (3) the conflict between worker abilities and organizational expectations. In numerous studies, role conflict has been associated with low job satisfaction, frustration, decreased trust and respect, low confidence in the organization, morale problems and high degrees of stress. Role ambiguity may be defined as a lack of clarity about the job, that is, a discrepancy between the information available to the employee and that which is required for successful job performance. In comparison to role conflict, role ambiguity has the highest correlation to job dissatisfaction. Role ambiguity is especially common amongst school administrators.

Individual Factors

Personal factors such as financial stability, marital satisfaction, as well as personality factors such neuroticism, excessive shyness, inflexibility, and poor stress management skills all contribute to how one is affected by stress on the job. The mutual interaction and accumulation of both personal and occupational stressors can certainly contribute to job burnout.

Training Deficits

Several different areas of job training are necessary to prevent occupational distress. The most obvious area is adequate initial preparation. Training and competencies are necessary to bolster confidence, as well as to allow the worker to get through each day without unnecessary dependence upon others or upon reference materials. On-the-job training is also necessary as technology advances. New professionals are most susceptible to some forms of distress. Secondly, training in communications skills is necessary in order to facilitate the ability of the employee to relate successfully with supervisors, fellow workers, and recipients of services or products. According to one survey, jobs are more frequently lost because of poor communication than because of any other factor. Finally, one needs to be taught how to deal with stress. Everyone needs to learn methods of coping with the variety of stressors faced each day.

Other Factors and Considerations

There are other secondary factors that can exacerbate stress such as poor working conditions, lack of job security, lifestyle changes, and a rapidly changing society that force individuals to make unexpected adjustments in their way of life and work. Administrators, teachers, and staff all face specific stressors that are unique to their position or role; however, most of these stressors fall within the general framework outlined above.

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.. while having too much to do can cause stress, it doesn't necessarily cause burnout ...
...More often, burnout happens when people feel out of control. If employees are working in a chaotic environment where it's not clear who is in control, they can burn out...
...Other critical factors that contribute to burnout are a lack of recognition and reward, a lack of community and support in the workplace, or an absence of fairness...
The biggest contributing factor in burnout, however, is a mismatch in values.
"When there are value problems or conflicts, you see greater instances of burnout"...

Excerpted from http://paracepts.com/resources/burnout.htm
A mismatch in the workplace sparks employee burnout
Review of The Truth About Burnout (Christina Maslach),
by Carol Smith, The Seattle Post-Intelligencer

In his book, ***Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy*** (1996), Gerald Corey lists the following as the causes of burnout:

Rather than having a single cause, burnout results from a combination of factors. It is best understood by considering the individual, interpersonal, and organizational factors that contribute to the condition. Recognizing the causes of burnout can itself be a step in dealing with it. A few of them are:

- doing the same type of work with little variation, especially if this work seems meaningless;
- giving a great deal personally and not getting back much in the way of appreciation or other positive responses;
- lacking a sense of accomplishment and meaning in work;
- being under constant and strong pressure to produce, perform, and meet deadlines, many of which may be unrealistic;
- working with a difficult population, such as those who are highly resistant, who are involuntary clients, or who show very little progress;
- conflict and tension among staff; absence of support from colleagues and an abundance of criticism;
- lack of trust between supervisor and mental-health workers, leading to conditions in which they are working against each other instead of toward commonly valued goals;
- not having opportunities for personal expression or for taking initiative in trying new approaches, a situation in which experimentation, change, and innovation are not only unrewarded but also actively discouraged;
- facing unrealistic demands on your time and energy;
- having a job that is both personally and professionally taxing without much opportunity for supervision, continuing education, or other forms of in-service training;
- unresolved personal conflicts beyond the job situation, such as marital tensions, chronic health problems, financial problems, and so on.

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C. How Do We Deal with Burnout?

Excerpt from:
Maslach, C., Schaufeli, W.B., & Leiter, M.P. (2001). Job Burnout. Annual *Review of Psychology* 52, 397-422.

The applied nature of burnout research has prompted calls for effective intervention throughout the research literature. This perspective has encouraged considerable effort, but relatively little systematic research. Various intervention strategies have been proposed-some try to treat burnout after it has occurred, whereas others focus on how to prevent burnout.

Interestingly, most discussions of burnout interventions focus primarily on individualcentered solutions, such as removing the worker from the job, or individual strategies for the worker, in which one either strengthens one's internal resources or changes one's work behaviors. This is particularly paradoxical given that research has found that situational and organizational factors play a bigger role in burnout than individual ones. Individualoriented approaches (e.g. developing effective coping skills or learning deep relaxation) may help individuals to alleviate exhaustion, but they do not really deal with the other two components of burnout. Also, individual strategies are relatively ineffective in the workplace, where a person has much less control over stressors than in other domains of his or her life. There are both philosophical and pragmatic reasons underlying the predominant focus on the individual, including notions of individual causality and responsibility, and the assumption that it is easier and cheaper to change people than organizations (Maslach & Goldberg 1998).

Changing the Individual

The primary focus of studies of burnout reduction has been educational interventions to enhance the capacity of individuals to cope with the workplace.... At the root of this approach are three questions: Can people learn coping skills? Can they apply this learning at work? Do new ways of coping affect burnout?

With respect to the first question, both the stress literature and a burgeoning self-help literature in the popular press have demonstrated that people can indeed learn new ways of coping. The similar conclusion to be drawn from the burnout research is that educational sessions can enhance the capacity of human service professionals to cope with the demands of their jobs. However, the second question does not receive such a positive answer. Applying new knowledge at work can be a challenge because people are operating under various constraints. Their roles at work require that they behave in specified ways, and organizational procedures stipulate the time and place in which much work occurs. Coworkers are designated according to their job functions, not their personal compatibility. Thus, if there is going to be significant change in the way work is done, it will require a degree of autonomy and an understanding of the organizational consequences of such change. Assuming that it is indeed possible for people to apply new coping skills at work, does this lead to reductions in burnout? The research findings are mixed. A wide variety of intervention strategies have been tried, including stress inoculation training, relaxation, time management, assertiveness training, rational emotive therapy, training in interpersonal and social skills, teambuilding, management of professional demands, and meditation. In some cases, a reduction in exhaustion has been reported, but in other cases it has not. Rarely do any programs

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report a change in cynicism or inefficacy. Limitations in study design, especially difficulties in access to appropriate control groups and a lack of longitudinal assessment, have constrained the interpretation of the existing research.

Changing the Organization

In line with the findings from the research literature, a focus on the job environment, as well as the person in it, is essential for interventions to deal with burnout. This suggests that the most effective mode of intervention is to combine changes in managerial practice with the educational interventions described above. Managerial interventions are necessary to change any of the six areas of worklife but are insufficient unless educational interventions convey the requisite individual skills and attitudes. Neither changing the setting nor changing the individuals is enough; effective change occurs when both develop in an integrated fashion.

The recognition of six areas of worklife expands the range of options for organizational intervention. For example, rather than concentrating on the area of work overload for an intervention (such as teaching people how to cope with overload, how to cut back on work, or how to relax), a focus on some of the other mismatches may be more effective. People may be able to tolerate greater workload if they value the work and feel they are doing something important, or if they feel wellrewarded for their efforts, and so an intervention could target these areas of value and reward.

Initial work in this area is encouraging but incomplete. One promising approach focused on the area of fairness and equity. Employees participated in weekly group sessions designed to identify ways of reducing the perceived inequities in their job situation. In comparison with control groups, participants reported a significant decrease in emotional exhaustion at six months and one year after the intervention. These changes were accompanied by increases in perceived equity. Again, however, the other two aspects of burnout did not change relative to baseline levels (van Dierendonck et al *1998).*

One advantage of a combined managerial and educational approach to intervention is that it tends to emphasize building engagement with work. The focus on engagement permits a closer alliance with the organizational mission, especially those aspects that pertain to the quality of worklife in the organization. A worksetting that is designed to support the positive development of energy, vigor, involvement, dedication, absorption, and effectiveness among its employees should be successful in promoting their well-being and productivity.- Moreover, the statement of a positive goal for intervention-building engagement (rather than reducing burnout)--enhances the accountability of the intervention. Assessing the presence of something is more definite than assessing the absence of its opposite.

Although the potential value of organizational interventions is great, they are not easy to implement. They are often complex in the level of collaboration that is necessary and they require a considerable investment of time, effort, and money. A new approach to such interventions has been designed on the basis of past research and consultation on burnout, and may provide better guidance to organizations for dealing with these issues (Leiter & Maslach *2000).*

Leiter M.P., & Maslach C. *(2000). Preventing Burnout and Building Engagement: A Complete Program for Organizational Renewal.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Maslach. C., & Goldberg, J. *(1998).* Prevention of burnout: new perspectives. *Applied Preventive Psychology, 7, 63-74.*

van Dierendonck, D., Schaufeli, W.B., & Buunk, B.P. *(1998).* The evaluation of an individual burnout intervention program: the role of inequity and social support. Journal of Applied Psychology 83,392-407

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II. Fact Sheets/Practice Notes

A. Three Stages of Burnout
(http://www.texmed.org/cme/phn/psb/burnout.asp)

- Highlights the stages and accompanying symptoms

B. Clues to Burnout

- Outlines behavioral, psychological, physical signs and symptoms of job stress which may lead to burnout.

C. Three School-based Approaches to Minimizing Burnout

1. Provides a starting point for generating discussion and ideas for intervention.

2. Note the section entitled *Urban School Restructuring.* A more detailed description of this approach is provided in the document entitled *Urban School Restructuring and Teacher Burnout* provided in the Models section.

Three Stages of Burnout

From the Continuing Medical Education website of the Texas Medical Association (www.texmed.org/cme/phn/psb/burnout.asp)

As defined by Girdin, Everly, & Dusek (1996), burnout is "a state of mental and/or physical exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress." (Note that research studies suggest that two of the major causes of burnout are bureaucratic atmospheres and overwork.) (Girdin, D.A., Everly, G.S. and Dusek, D.E., Controlling Stress and Tension, Allyn & Bacon, Needham Heights, MA, 1996)

Stage 1. Stress Arousal

Stage 2 . Energy Conservation

Stage 3. Exhaustion

Stage 1: Stress Arousal (Includes any two of the following symptoms)

1. Persistent irritability
2. Persistent anxiety
3. Periods of high blood pressure
4. Bruxism (grinding your teeth at night)
5. Insomnia
6. Forgetfulness
7. Heart palpitations
8. Unusual heart rhythms (skipped beats)
9. Inability to concentrate
10. Headaches

Stage 2: Energy Conservation (Includes any two of the following)

1. Lateness for work
2. Procrastination
3. Needed three-day weekends
4. Decreased sexual desire
5. Persistent tiredness in the mornings
6. Turning work in late
7. Social withdrawal (from friends and/or family)
8. Cynical attitudes
9. Resentfulness
10. Increased coffee/tea/cola consumption
11. Increased alcohol consumption
12. Apathy

Again, any two of these symptoms may signal you're in Stage 2 of the burnout cycle.

Stage 3: Exhaustion(Includes any two of the following)

1. Chronic sadness or depression
2. Chronic stomach or bowel problems
3. Chronic mental fatigue
4. Chronic physical fatigue
5. Chronic headaches
6. The desire to "drop out" of society
7. The desire to move away from friends, work, and perhaps even family
8. Perhaps the desire to commit suicide

Again, any two of these symptoms may signal you're in Stage 3 of the burnout cycle.

These stages usually occur sequentially from Stage 1 to Stage 3, although the process can be stopped at any point. The exhaustion stage is where most people finally get a sense that something may be wrong. The symptoms include: chronic sadness or depression, chronic stomach or bowel problems, chronic mental fatigue, chronic physical fatigue, chronic headaches or migraines, the desire to "drop out"of society, the desire to get away from family, friends, and even recurrent suicidal ideation.

Remember, burnout is a process that usually occurs sequentially, it progresses through stages thus giving you the opportunity to recognize symptoms and take the necessary steps to prevent it.

Clues to Burnout:

Signs & Symptoms of Job Stress

➤ **Behavioral:**
Frequent clockwatching
Postponing client contacts; resisting phone and office visits
Stereotyping clients
Treadmilling: Working harder and getting less done
Increasing reliance on rules and regulations: "Going by the book"
Avoiding discussion of work with colleagues
More use/approval of behavioral control measures (e.g., tranquilizers)
Excessive use of drugs and alcohol
Marital and family conflict
High absenteeism
Irritability with clients and colleagues
Avoiding work responsibility (e.g., paperwork, meetings)

➤ **Psychological**
High resistance to going to work every day
Sense of failure
Feelings of anger and resentment
Feeling discouraged and indifferent
Negativism
Loss of positive feelings toward clients
Self-preoccupation
Feeling powerless and hopeless
Rigidity in thinking and resistance to change
Suspiciousness and paranoia
Anxiety
Excessive number of "Bad Days"
Depression
Feelings of Guilt and Blame

➤ **Physical**
Feeling tired during workday
Fatigue
Exhaustion
Sleep disorders
Frequent colds and flu
Frequent headaches
Frequent gastro-intestinal disturbances
Frequent vague aches and pains

Three School-Based Approaches to Minimizing Burnout

In general, schools attempt to minimize burnout in three ways:

1. Reducing Environment Stressors

Urban School Restructuring

In the book, *Urban School Restructuring and Teacher Burnout* (1991), Barry Farber and Carol Ascher discuss how several components of school restructuring namely: school-based management accountability, career ladders, school-within-schools, curriculum initiatives, flexible scheduling and team teaching, have the potential of improving the context of urban teaching. Each can possibly promote a greater sense of efficacy and control among teachers, and a stronger teacher - student connection. However, the authors also underscore how the process involved in school restructuring can lead to teacher burnout. Ultimately, the authors conclude that unless the structural components directly address ways to improve teaching and learning such as district policies on pupil assignment, professional development, or evaluation which are all critical to teacher well-being, teacher burnout will continue to be a prevailing concern in the school system.

For a more detailed discussion of this model refer to the ERIC Digest section of this introductory packet on ***Urban School Restructuring And Teacher Burnout.***

2. Increasing Personal Capabilities (job competence and stress coping)

Job Competence

Around the country a variety of model programs have been established to enhance professional competence and growth and in the process to counter burnout. The following are but two examples.

Atlanta Public Schools -- Atlanta has a Teacher Resource Center which provides teachers and non-instructional staff with staff development services. The center has several functions: student teacher placement, certification renewal, staff training, and personnel evaluation. The Teacher Resource Center is equipped with a technology center, a teacher center, a media services center, a science center, and a professional library. In 1994, the center provided 1,336 workshops to over 38,000 participants. Participants included teachers, administrators, service employees, students, and parents. In addition, the center has a New Teacher Institute which provides new teachers with support, seminars, mentors, and orientation. The center also provides conflict resolution and peer mediation training.

From: Dr. Chuck Fuller, Director of Staff Development, Atlanta Public Schools, 210 Pryor St., SW, Atlanta, GA 30335. Phone: (404) 827-8657.

Baltimore City Public Schools -- Baltimore's Professional Development Center has several components. The center offers district staff a series of workshops, ranging in issues from classroom management to leadership development to technology to safety. BCPS also has an Academy for Educational Leadership, which offers a Skill Builder Series. This series of seminars and workshops is offered to all school system leaders -- Superintendent's Cabinet, principals, assistant principals, and central office leaders.

Contact: Lyle. R. Patzkowsky, Director of Leadership Development. City of Baltimore, Department of Education / Professional Development, Organizational Development and Attitudinal Reform, 2500 E. Northern Pkwy., Baltimore, MD 21214. (410) 396-1520/21.

Stress Coping

Many school districts have established employee assistance programs that can help school professionals enhance their ability to cope with stress. As described by one district:

Employee Assistance Program -- Employee assistance programs are designed to help employees deal with personal problems. Most of us have stresses at some time in our lives. Generally we can managed them on our own. At times, however, it is helpful to discuss problems with someone other than our family or friends. This program provides you and your family with such an opportunity.

Examples of the type of assistance provided are: Crisis intervention, assessment, information, and referral services are available for a wide range of problems which affect personal lives, and may carry over into work. Some types of emotional distress can be discussed confidentially through an early assistance program.

3. Social Support

There are a variety of ways school professionals can enhance social support as a way to minimize burnout. These include working together on problems (teaming), establishing mutual support groups, and creating debriefing mechanisms. A good example of a debriefing mechanism is the *Critical Incident Stress Debriefing* process that was developed for crisis workers.

Critical Incident Stress Debriefing

This is a technique for the reduction of stress and the mitigation of its ill effects (J. T. Mitchell & G.S. Evely, *Critical Incident Stress Debriefing*, Chevron Pub.,Ellicott City, MD, 1993).

A debriefing is a clinician guided group discussion of a traumatic event. It is a psychological and educational process intended (1) to mitigate the impact of a traumatic event, and (2) to accelerate normal recovery in normal people with normal reactions to abnormal events. The session should occur between 24 and 72 hours after the event. However, even months later it can be very helpful.

Debriefing is an opportunity for

- education on stress and its effects
- ventilation of pent-up emotion
- reassurance
- forewarning of predictable symptoms and reactions to stress
- confronting the fallacies of uniqueness and abnormality
- positive contact with a mental health professional
- building group cohesiveness
- interagency cooperation
- doing prevention
- screening to identify persons in crisis or at high risk
- referring persons in need to appropriate resources

III. Tools/Handouts

A. Enhancing School Culture: Reculturing Schools

- Distribute to school staff as a stimulus for further discussion

B. Avoiding Burnout & Staying Healthy
(http://www.gae.org/teacher/burnout.html)

- Particularly relevant for new teachers - highlights general lifestyle tips for preventing stress in preparation for and throughout the school year

C. Bouncing Back from Burnout

- Targeted to teachers - emphasis is placed on restructuring time, resources, and priorities

Enhancing School Culture:

Reculturing Schools

Excerpted From Positive or negative? By Kent D. Peterson in the *Journal of Staff Development*, Summer 2002, vol.23, no.3

Every organization has a culture, that history and underlying set of unwritten expectations that shape everything about the school. A school culture influences the ways people think, feel, and act, Being able to understand and shape the culture is key to a school's success in promoting staff and student learning. As Fullan (2001) recently noted, "Reculturing is the name of the game."

When a school has a positive, professional culture, one finds meaningful staff development, successful curricular reform, and the effective use of student performance data. In these cultures, staff and student learning thrive. In contrast, a school with a negative or toxic culture that does not value professional learning, resists change, or devalues staff development hinders success. School culture will have either a positive or a detrimental impact on the quality and success of staff development.

What Is School Culture?

School culture is the set of norms, values and beliefs, rituals and ceremonies, symbols and stories that make up the "persona" of the school. These unwritten expectations build up over time as teachers, administrators, parents, and students work together, solve problems, deal with challenges and, at times, cope with failures. For example, every school has a set of expectations about what can be discussed at staff meetings, what constitutes good teaching techniques, how willing the staff is to change, and the importance of staff development (Deal & Peterson, 1999). Schools also have rituals and ceremonies--communal events to celebrate success, to provide closure during collective transitions, and to recognize people's contributions to the school. School cultures also include symbols and stories that communicate core values, reinforce the mission, and build a shared sense of commitment. Symbols are an outward sign of inward values. Stories are group representations of history and meaning. In positive cultures, these features reinforce learning, commitment, and motivation, and they are consistent with the school's vision.

Positive vs. Toxic Cultures

While there is no one best culture, recent research and knowledge of successful schools identify common features in professional learning communities. In these cultures, staff, students, and administrators value learning, work to enhance curriculum and instruction, and focus on students. In schools with professional learning communities, the culture possesses:

- A widely shared sense of purpose and values-,
- Norms of continuous learning and improvement-,
- A commitment to and sense of responsibility for the learning of all students;
- Collaborative, collegial relationships; and
- Opportunities for staff reflection, collective inquiry, and sharing personal practice.

(Stein, 1998; Lambert, 1998; Fullan, 2001; DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Hord, 1998).

In addition, these schools often have a common professional language, communal stories of success, extensive opportunities for quality professional development, and ceremonies that celebrate improvement, collaboration, and learning (Peterson & Deal, 2002). All of these elements build commitment, forge motivation, and foster learning for staff and students.

Some schools have the opposite--negative subcultures with "toxic" norms and values that hinder growth and learning. Schools with toxic cultures lack a clear sense of purpose, have norms that reinforce inertia, blame students for lack of progress, discourage collaboration, and often have actively hostile relations among staff. These schools are not healthy for staff or students.

By actively addressing the negativity and working to shape more positive cultures, staff and principals can turn around many of these schools. Principals are key in addressing negativity and hostile relations.

Staff Development

School culture enhances or hinders professional learning. Culture enhances professional learning when teachers believe professional development is important, valued, and "the way we do things around here." Professional development is nurtured when the school's history and stories include examples of meaningful professional learning and a group commitment to improvement.

Staff learning is reinforced when sharing ideas, working collaboratively to learn, and using newly learned skills are recognized symbolically and orally in faculty meetings and other school ceremonies. For example, in one school, staff meetings begin with the story of a positive action a teacher took to help a student--a ceremonial school coffee cup is presented to the teacher and a round of applause follows.

The most positive cultures value staff members who help lead their own development, create well-defined improvement plans, organize study groups, and learn in a variety of ways. Cultures that celebrate, recognize, and support staff learning bolster professional community.

Negative cultures can seriously impair staff development. Negative norms and values, hostile relations, and pessimistic stories deplete the culture. In one school, for example, the only stories of staff development depict boring, ill-defined failures. Positive experiences are attacked--they don't fit the cultural norms. In another school, teachers are socially ostracized for sharing their positive experiences at workshops or training programs. At this school's faculty meetings, no one is allowed to share interesting or useful ideas learned in a workshop. Positive news about staff development opportunities goes underground for those who still value personal learning (Deal & Peterson, 1999).

In some schools, professional development is not valued, teachers do not believe they have anything new to learn, or they believe the only source for new ideas is trial-and-error in one's own classroom. Anyone who shares a new idea from a book, workshop, or article is laughed at. In these schools, positive views of professional learning are countercultural. Those who value learning are criticized. The positive individuals may either leave the school (reinforcing the culture) or become outcasts, seeking support with like-minded staff.

Learning Communities

Principals and other school leaders can and should shape school culture. They do this through three key processes. First, they read the culture, understanding the culture's historical source as well as analyzing current norms and values. Second, they assess the culture, determining which elements of the culture support the school's core purposes and the mission, and which hinder achieving valued ends. Finally, they actively shape the culture by reinforcing positive aspects and working to transform negative aspects of the culture (Peterson & Deal, 2002).

Read the Culture

Principals can learn the history of the school by talking to the school's storytellers (they are the staff who enjoy recounting history), looking through prior school improvement plans for signals about what is really important, not just what is required, or using a faculty meeting to discuss what the school has experienced, especially in staff development, over the past two decades. It is important to examine contemporary aspects of the culture--a series of exercises can determine the core norms and values, rituals, and ceremonies of the school, and their meanings. For example, asking each staff member to list six adjectives to describe the school, asking staff to tell a story that characterizes what the school is about, or having staff write metaphors describing the school can reveal aspects of the school culture.

One approach asks staff to complete the following metaphor: "If my school were an animal it would be a because The principal then looks for themes and patterns. Are the animals strong, nurturing, hostile, loners, or herd animals? Are the animals stable or changeable? These metaphors can suggest deeper perceptions of the culture.

Finally, developing a timeline of rituals and ceremonies for the year--asking when they occur, what symbols and values are important in each, and what the ceremonies communicate about the school and its commitment to professional learning can fill in the culture picture. For example, what does the end-of-the year staff gathering communicate? Is it joyful, sorrowful, congenial, or standoffish? What are the rites and rituals of the gathering? What traditions keep going year-to-year, and what do they represent? Is the last gathering of the year a time for closure, goodbyes, and a sharing of hopes for the future?

Assess the Culture

Staff and administrators should then look at what they have learned about the culture and ask two central questions:

- What aspects of the culture are positive and should be reinforced?
- What aspects of the culture are negative and harmful and should be changed?

The staff can also ask: What norms and values support learning? Which depress or hinder the growth of energy, motivation, and commitment? What symbols or ceremonies are dead and dying and need to be buried--or need to be resuscitated?

There are other approaches as well. One way to assess the culture is to use the School Culture Survey (Tools for Schools, 2001) to examine core norms and values. Collect the survey results to see how strongly held different norms or values are, then determine whether they fit the culture the school wants.

Shape the Culture

There are many ways to reinforce the positive aspects of the culture.

Staff leaders and principals can:

- Celebrate successes in staff meetings and ceremonies-,
- Tell stories of accomplishment and collaboration whenever they have the opportunity; and
- Use clear, shared language created during professional development to foster a commitment to staff and student learning.

Leaders also can reinforce norms and values in their daily work, their words, and their interactions. They can establish rituals and traditions that make staff development an opportunity for culture building as well as learning. As we saw at Wisconsin Hills Middle School, all workshops began with sharing food and stories of success with students. At other times, leaders can reinforce quality professional learning by providing additional resources to implement new ideas, by recognizing those committed to learning their craft, and by continuously supporting quality opportunities for informal staff learning and collaboration.

Staff and administrators may also need to change negative and harmful aspects of the culture. This is not easy. It is done by addressing the negative directly, finding examples of success to counteract stories of failure, impeding those who try to sabotage or criticize staff learning, and replacing negative stories of professional development with concrete positive results.

Conclusion

Today, shaping culture is even more important because of the national focus on higher curriculum standards, assessments, and accountability.

Standards-based reform efforts attempt to align content, teaching, and assessment. But without a culture that supports and values these structural changes, these reforms can fail.

Schools need both clear structures and strong, professional cultures to foster teacher learning. Carefully designed curriculum and assessments are keys to successful reform, along with teacher professional development. The school's culture either supports or sabotages quality professional learning. Developing and sustaining a positive, professional culture that nurtures staff learning is the task of everyone in the school. With a strong, positive culture that supports professional development and student learning, schools can become places where every teacher makes a difference and every child learns.

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Tips for Teachers:

Avoiding Burnout & Staying Healthy

http://www.gae.org/teacher/te_burnout.html

Within the first few weeks of school, there will be many new demands made of you: new texts, new students, new techniques, new schedules, and a new way of life. It is an exciting as well as stressful time for new teachers. In the midst of all this excitement, you may notice some physical and emotional reactions to the new demands. Understanding what is taking place and how to cope with it is very important to the beginning teacher.

Understand that the only people without stress are in the cemetery! It is not so much the stress in our lives that hurts us but how we respond to it. You will find that teaching can be very stressful--sometimes almost unbearable. But many have survived it and you can, too. Here are some useful techniques and "preventive medicine" to keep you from becoming a drop-out:

✏**Exercise.** After a day of teaching, you owe it to your body to shake off the dust. It will revive you. The best cardiovascular activities include walking, swimming, and jogging.

✏**Leave your teaching at school.** If you must lug home school work, get it done early in the evening. Better yet, do it at school and leave it there.

✏**Don't schedule all of your leisure time.** You live by a schedule all day long. Leave yourself some "open space."

✏**Get plenty of sleep.** If you are well rested, problems do not always seem so large.

✏**Pursue a project or hobby.** Find something that requires so much concentration that you forget about school for a while.

✏**Find a friend. Enlist a trusted listener.** Talking a problem out won't make it go away, but it will relieve some of the stress associated with the problem.

✏**Don't procrastinate.** Having something "hanging over you" can cause more tension than the project is worth.

✏**Don't feel that you must do everything.** You can't and you won't. So why worry about it?

✏**Keep a "things to do" list.** Review it daily and do at least one or two things. As the list gets smaller, you will feel a sense of accomplishment.

✏**Recognize and accept your limitations.** Most of set unreasonable and perfectionist goals for ourselves. But, we can never be perfect, so we can come to feel a sense of failure or inadequacy no matter how well we perform.

✏**Learn to tolerate and forgive.** Intolerance and judging others often lead to frustration and anger. Try to really understand the other person's concerns and fears.

✏**Learn to plan.** Disorganization breeds stress. Having too many projects going at the same time leads to confusion, forgetfulness and a sense of uncompleted tasks. Plan ahead. Develop your own method of getting things done in an orderly manner.

✏**Be a positive person.** Avoid criticizing others. Try to focus on the good qualities of those around you. Excessive criticism of others inevitably reflects on you.

✏**Learn to play.** You need to escape from the pressures of life and have fun regularly. Find pastimes or hobbies regardless of your level of ability.

✏**Rid yourself of worry.** A study has shown that 40 percent of the items people worry about never happen; 35 percent can be changed; 15 percent turn out better than expected; 8 percent involve needless concern; and only 2 percent really deserve attention.

*Bouncing Back from Burnout**

Judy Downs Lombardi, in: *Do You Have Teacher Burnout* (1990), suggests the following:

✿Overhaul your job. Make a list of routine or tedious tasks you do as part of your job and come up with creative new ways to tackle them. Even tasks that seem fun-resistant can become more satisfying if you give free reign to your imagination.

✿ Try new instructional strategies. Rather than relying on safe and predictable methods you've always used, try something different. If you're tired of writing student evaluations, consider switching to portfolio assessment. (To navigate through these new waters, you may find it rewarding to team up with a colleague and share the experience.)

✿Challenge yourself to keep learning. Even if you're a veteran, there's always more to learn about teaching. Identify an area, such as writing in math class or invented spelling, that you'd like to learn more about, and seek out professional development opportunities. Take a class, attend a conference, or organize a workshop.

✿ Collaborate with colleagues. If you resent or disregard suggestions from colleagues on how to enhance you teaching, you may be cutting yourself off from a valuable idea-sharing and support network. The more isolated you are, the greater the risk that you'll become unsure about what you're doing, suspicious of your coworkers, or short on new ideas. Colleagues can provide helpful feedback and reassurance.

✿Try changing grade levels. If you've been teaching fifth grade for a while, why not consider trying your hand at kindergarten? Sometimes teaching an older or younger group of students will better fit your training, skills, and interests.

✿Give yourself permission to be less than perfect. Too many teachers believe that none of their successes count if they have one failure. Accept that teaching is difficult and challenging. Pain and failure will always be part of the profession, just as joy and success will be. Keep in mind that you can only thrive if you give yourself room to make mistakes and learn from them.

✿Also, if you overdo, overachieve or push yourself or your students too hard, your self-imposed pressures and demands will only stunt your growth because you'll push yourself to exhaustion.

✿Try not to wrap up your identity with your job. Remember that you are not just a teacher--you are a person who has chosen to be in the teaching profession. Cultivate outside interests and hobbies.

✿Realize that you can help students but you can't save them from society's ills. As difficult as it may be to accept, you can't solve all of your student's problems--you can't keep them from feeling the pain of divorce, economic hardship, and so on. Teachers can, and should, give students room to feel, think, and bear consequences, but they can't rescue students or fight their battles for them.

✿Learn to care for yourself. As caretaker professionals, teachers often over care for others and under care for themselves. Nurturing your students is important, but you must first nurture yourself. Self-preservation is an essential, healthy habit, so pay more attention to your own needs and well-being. Conserve and replenish your emotional and physiological resources--they're limited!

✿ Practice techniques for stress reduction. If you're feeling the strains of teaching, practice strategies for relieving tension. Remember to carve out time to relax, pursue your hobbies, and spend time with family and friends. If you feel like you can't cope, consider seeing a trained counselor.

✿ Examine other areas of education as natural extensions of teaching. Perhaps taking more college courses would enable you to become a reading specialist, school psychologist, diagnostician, staff development trainer, consultant, guidance counselor or other staff support person. Teaching experience is often the best avenue to these specialties.

✿Think through your career goals. Is teaching still right for you? Most teachers can probably think of a colleague who should have changed careers a long time ago. Don't wait until you're completely disenchanted to assess where you are going and whether it's time for a change in professions.

Dr. Judy Downs Lombardi, a professor at the University of Tampa, works with student teachers and teachers, and is always on the lookout for signs of burnout.

IV. Model Programs
(for review and subsequent discussion)

A. Supporting Professionals-at-Risk: Evaluating Interventions to Reduce Burnout and Improve Retention of Special Educators

- Highlight occupational stress management interventions and their effectiveness (includes internal coping methods and active problem-solving techniques)

B. Urban School Restructuring and Teach Burnout
(http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed340812.html)

- Strategies calling for system-level change to prevent and reduce burnout

Supporting Professionals-at-Risk:
Evaluating Interventions to Reduce Burnout and Improve Retention of Special Educators

Elizabeth Cooley, Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development
Paul Yovanoff, Alder Group, Inc.

Two interventions were designed to equip participants with specific problem-solving and coping strategies for dealing more effectively with the stressors they encounter on the job. The interventions targeted *self-preservation skill* for educators - those skills and strategies most likely to help an individual remain relatively "sane," even in relatively "insane"" places. On first glance, one might construe our approach to be a quick fix, because its duration was only 10 weeks at 2 hr/week. And naturally, given the complexity and scope of the systemic issues that contribute to teachers' burnout and attrition, a 10-week program might seem inadequate. Nevertheless, even as more large-scale organizational or political interventions are developed and implemented toward redress of the larger problems, we believed it would be worth while to assist practicing professionals in managing the immediate situations before them - that is, to do the best they can with what they've got. Specifically, the program consisted of two interventions.

Intervention 1: Stress Management-Burnout Prevention Workshops

As mentioned, many of the stressful aspects of the special education teaching profession are either inherent to the situation or difficult to change. Moreover, the burnout that often results from demanding and stressful working conditions can itself exacerbate difficulties because of its accompanying negative, self-defeating coping behaviors.

Coping takes many forms. Approaches to handling stress may be either *direct* (e.g., changing the source of stress) or *indirect* (e.g., changing the way one thinks about or physically responds to the stress to reduce its impact). In addition, coping strategies may be *active* (e.g., taking some action to change oneself or the situation) or *inactive* (e.g., avoiding or denying the source of stress). In general, active strategies are more effective than inactive ones, while both direct and indirect strategies can be constructive (Pines & Aronson, 1988).

The program consisted of five weekly 2-hr workshops that were informal and supportive, and that followed a format of interactive presentation, small/large-group discussion, applications during sessions, and practice between sessions. The content for these sessions targeted three types of coping skills:

1. Skills for changing the situation itself: Situational coping skills.
Drawing on management and problem-solving literature, these sessions offered two frameworks for looking at and changing stressful situations by first identifying the changeable aspects and then using a problem-solving approach to develop and carry out an action plan for creating solutions. Participants were also provided specific assertive communication tools for enlisting the cooperation of others in seeking and implementing positive change, and for setting and keeping appropriate limits.

2. Skills for changing one's physical response to the situation: Physiological coping skills.
Stress is fundamentally a form of wear and tear on the body. Thus, we drew on a variety of literature on physiological stress-coping strategies for these sessions. Participants learned both long (30-min) and very short (30-s) forms of muscle relaxation that can be used for self-renewal in everyday work situations (Woolfolk & Lehrer, 1984). As well, we touched on other physiological approaches for coping with stress (e.g., nutrition and stretching).

3. Skills for changing how one thinks about the situation: Cognitive coping skills.
Simply put, much stress happens "between the ears' as a result of our thoughts and beliefs, or cognitions. These sessions drew on cognitive therapy literature and targeted ways to replace self-defeating, self-limiting beliefs with beliefs that are more constructive, realistic, and empowering. Participants learned first to recognize distorted or self-defeating beliefs and then to coach themselves and one another to think differently about themselves or about the situation. Specifically, they coached one another in ways to let go of unrealistic, even tyrannical expectations they held of themselves given the limitations and realities of the situations they faced and to give themselves permission to view their best efforts as good enough.

All sessions followed a format of interactive lecture, small-group discussions and role plays, with homework assignments that provided participants the opportunity to try out the skills and new behaviors in their work environments. Each session began with small- and large-group discussion of the experiences gained via the homework assignments, and assignments were turned in for the instructors' review and feedback.

Intervention 2: The Peer Collaboration Program

Because of the apparent value of collegial support in preventing or alleviating job stress and burnout, researchers have advocated creating more regular opportunities for peer support for special education teachers and others in stressful job roles.

Due to its emphasis on supportive, constructive dialogue between professional peers, this intervention seems to have potential for addressing issues of collegial isolation and lack of administrative support among special educators.

The Peer Collaboration Program, as originally developed, consisted of training pairs of teachers to use a four-step collegial dialogue to assist each other in identifying and solving student related problems. For this study, it was modified to apply other work-related problems as well. Via this process, each member of the pair takes a turn as - "initiator" (the one presenting a problem) and a "facilitator" (the one providing assistance in problem-solving). The four steps were as *follows:*

1. Clarifying. The initiating teacher brings a brief, written description of the problem and responds to clarifying questions asked by the facilitator. This step is the longest of the four designed to assist the initiating teacher to think of the problem in different or expanded ways. This step continues until the initiating teacher feels that all of the relevant issues have been covered and is ready to move on to summarizing.

2. Summarizing. In this step, the initiating teacher summarizes three facets of the problem being discussed: the specific patterns of behavior that are problematic, the teacher's typical response to them, and the particular aspects of the problem that fall under the teacher's control.

3. Intervention and Prediction. The teachers together generate three possible action plans, and the initiator predicts possible positive and negative outcomes for each one. The initiator then chooses one of the solutions for implementation.

4. Evaluation. The initiator develops a two part plan to evaluate the solution's effectiveness. The first part consists of a plan to answer the question "Did I do it?" (i.e., implementation of the solution), and the second part consists of ways to answer the question "Did it work?" (i.e., impact on targeted outcomes).

Participants attended one 3-hr training sessions in which the process was described, modeled, and practiced with feedback from other participants and from the instructors.

From Supporting Professionals-at-Risk: Evaluating Interventions to Reduce Burnout and Improve Retention of Special Educators. E. Cooley & P. Yovanoff (1996). Exceptional Children, Vol. 62, No. 4, pp.336-355.

ERIC Digests

ERIC Identifier: ED340812
Publication Date: 1991-07-00
Author: Farber, Barry - Ascher, Carol
Source: ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education New York NY.

Urban School Restructuring and Teacher Burnout. ERIC/CUE Digest, Number 75.

THIS DIGEST WAS CREATED BY ERIC, THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER. FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ERIC, CONTACT ACCESS ERIC 1-800-LET-ERIC

Urban schools have long been troubled and have endured many waves of reform. Consequently, staff exhaustion and cynicism often affect how, and even whether, these reforms are implemented. While school restructuring, the latest reform measure, can break down bureaucracy and empower teachers, it also can seem distant from the day-to-day problems of most teachers, and even increase burnout among some (Corcoran, Walker, & White, 1988).

Burnout--the reaction to prolonged high stress--commonly results either in withdrawing and caring less, or in working harder, often mechanically, to the point of exhaustion (Farber, 1991). This digest considers the impact of several components of school restructuring on burnout.

SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT

School-based management (SBM) offers greater participation in decision-making to teachers, parents, and others at the school level. In the best case, SBM empowers teachers to develop the process and goals of education, and enhances their sense of professionalism. For some, the chance to exercise administrative and negotiating skills may be a welcome challenge (Lichtenstein, McLaughlin, & Knudsen, 1991).

But SBM may also involve teachers either in long meetings about insignificant decisions or in making important decisions for which they lack resources, support, and expertise. In troubled schools, SBM teams can get bogged down in daily crises, resulting in frustration as long-term goals recede from sight (Richardson & Sistrunk, 1989). At the same time, by raising the school board's and the general public's expectations, SBM may increase pressure on teachers.

Furthermore, reputedly empowered teachers may not relish their authority, feel more effective in their classrooms, or experience themselves as professionally enhanced. In fact, teachers' sense of empowerment may arise less from controlling what goes on in a school than from their knowledge about their fields, their professional community, and educational policy (Lichtenstein, McLaughlin, & Knudsen, 1991).

Finally, SBM may increase frustration if teachers' new control doesn't lead to clear educational benefits, and if the new bureaucracy is as intransigent as the school principal, acting autonomously, has been (Gomez, 1989).

ACCOUNTABILITY

When accountability systems help teachers identify and serve their students' needs, these systems can reduce burnout. However, burned-out teachers already exhausted may not participate in the extensive thinking necessary to develop an effective system, and then may experience the system as an externally imposed and inflexible interference in their classroom.

By inviting scrutiny from new sources, even good accountability systems increase teacher stress and can promote covert competition, as teachers strive to make their classroom "the best" (Trusman, 1989). Finally, insofar as accountability systems are based on externally imposed criteria, they are antithetical to teacher empowerment, which has long been considered one of the strongest antidotes to burnout (Friedman, 1991).

CAREER LADDERS

Career ladders show respect for experienced teachers demonstrating particular excellence by offering promotional opportunities. They enable teachers to earn more money, take on new roles (mentoring novice teachers, for instance), and gain more prestige and professional fulfillment.

However, as with any system that rewards only some individuals, competition increases. Bitterness and cynicism may also result if the criteria for promotion are ambiguous or are tainted by political considerations. Promoted teachers may experience added stress and burnout if extra pay and prestige are not accompanied by sufficient resources or administrative support.

SCHOOLS-WITHIN-SCHOOLS

Breaking down large schools into small communities is an easy way to improve the quality of life for both teachers and students. Schools-within-schools enable better communication among teachers, parents, and students; enhance the staff's sense of control; and promote a generally warmer, more intimate atmosphere (Bryk & Driscoll, 1988).

Of course, a small community can also promote increased scrutiny and greater group tension, exacerbating jealousy, favoritism, and competition for scarce resources. Sometimes the minischools within a larger school also compete for recognition and resources, and add a layer of bureaucracy and stress to an already oppressive structure.

Because minischools are small, intense communities, only one or two burned-out teachers can sabotage the high energy needed by the group. However, since it takes a fair amount of energy and enthusiasm to work in one, burned-out teachers are apt to decline an assignment there.

CURRICULUM INITIATIVES

Curriculum initiatives such as multidisciplinary units, new approaches to math or reading, and multicultural education can give teachers a renewed sense of excitement, and draw faculty together in collaborative ventures. Insofar as these initiatives are tailored to students' needs, they may improve performance, and, thus, teachers' sense of efficacy.

Ideally, curriculum changes should be accompanied by extensive staff development, mentoring, and peer coaching, but these are often in short supply. Thus, teachers may suffer from the additional stresses of having more work but not additional support.

FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING AND TEAM TEACHING

Flexible scheduling and team teaching promote sustained contacts both among teachers and with students, lessening the possibility of teacher burnout by improving collegial contact and support. Yet, collaborative activities will not foster collegiality if the school sets up a competitive ethos. Nor do these reforms address the major obstacle to collegiality: heavy workloads due to large classes and undue clerical work (Corcoran, et al., 1988).

SCHOOL RESTRUCTURING AND BURNOUT

The components of school restructuring reviewed above have the potential of improving the context of urban teaching. Each can make possible a greater sense of efficacy and control among teachers, and stronger teacher-student connection. However, none affects such district policies as pupil assignment, professional development, or evaluation, all of which are critical to teachers' well-being. None ensures that teachers will be involved in decision-

making or work with their peers--or that they will feel empowered by their added responsibilities. Except for the curriculum initiatives, none necessarily improves teaching and learning, the best way to decrease burnout (Farber, 1991).

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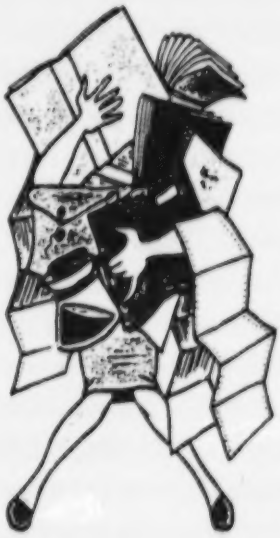
This ERIC Digest was developed in 1991 by Barry Farber and Carol Ascher with funding from the Office of Budget and Evaluation Service and the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education under contract no. RI88062013. Consultation on this digest was provided by Judy Aronson, of the United Federation of Teachers, Special Educator Support Program. The opinions expressed in this Digest do not necessarily reflect the position or policies of OERI or the Department of Education. Digests are in the public domain and may be freely reproduced.

Title: Urban School Restructuring and Teacher Burnout. ERIC/CUE Digest, Number 75.
Document Type: Information Analyses---ERIC Information Analysis Products (IAPs) (071); Information Analyses ---ERIC Digests (Selected) in Full Text (073);
Available From: ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education, Teachers College, Box 40, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027 (free). http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed340812.html

V. Additional Resources



A. QuickFinds on Burnout

B. Selected References

C. At-Risk Teachers

- A review of the research literature on risk factors for teacher stress, burnout, absenteeism, and attrition. The review also proposes a model of how negative outcomes for school staff impact student learning.

This Center Response is from our website at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu To access the online version, visit our website, click "Search & Quick Find" on the left and then scroll down in the list of "Center Responses" to *Burnout*

A Center Response:

The following reflects our most recent response for technical assistance related to BURNOUT. This list represents a sample of information to get you started and is not meant to be an exhaustive list.

(Note: Clicking on the following links causes a new window to be opened. To return to this window, close the newly opened one).

If you go online and access the Quick Find, you can simply click over to the various sites to access documents, agencies, etc. For your convenience here, the website addresses for various Quick Find entries are listed in a table at the end of this document in order of appearance, cross-referenced by the name of the resource.

Center Developed Resources and Tools

- NEW! Quick Training Aid
  A brief set of resources to guide those providing an inservice session on **School Staff Burnout**. Also useful as a quick self-tutorial. (note: opens up in a new window)
- An Introductory Packet on Understanding and Minimizing Staff Burnout
- School Staff Burnout
- School-Based Mutual Support Groups (For Parents, Staff, and Older Students)
- Volunteers to Help Teachers and School Address Barriers to Learning
- Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom-Focused Enabling
- Enhancing School Culture: Toward a Caring School Culture

Relevant Publications on the Internet

- Collaborative Schools
- Creating Learning Communities: Models, Resources, and New Ways of Thinking About Teaching and Learning
- Early Childhood Educator - The Breakroom: "Battling Burnout"
- Fourteen Tips to Help Educators Deal with Stress
- Organizing Systems to Support Competent Social Behavior in Children and Youth: Volume III, Teacher Stress and Burnout
- Predicting Teacher Burnout over Time: Effects of Work Stress, Social Support, and Self-Doubts on Burnout and Its Consequences
- Preventing Parent Burn Out: Model for Teaching Effective Coping Strategies to Parents of Children with Learning Disabilities
- Professional Development Newsletter
- Reduce Your Losses: Help New Teachers Become Veteran Teachers
- Spotlight on... Stress, Burnout and Dissatisfaction in School Psychology
- Staff "Burnout" in Child Care Settings
- Strategy Brief Series on Teacher Mobility
- Stress Busters: Thoughts to Reduce Your Work Stress!
- Stress Prevention Tips

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

- Survival Guide for New Teachers: How New Teachers Can Work Effectively With Veteran Teachers, Parents, Principals, and Teacher Educators
- Teacher Collabotation in Urban Secondary Schools
- Teacher Tips: Avoiding Burnout & Staying Healthy
- Teachers Who Learn, Kids Who Achieve
- Team Teaching
- Three Stages of Burnout
- Urban School Restructuring and Teacher Burnout
- Violence Against Teachers
- Violence in Communities and Schools: A Stress Reductio. Guide for Teachers and other School Staff

Selected Materials from our Clearinghouse

- Avoiding Burnout: Strategies in Early Childhood Education
- Effective Co-Teaching
- Job Burnout in Public School Education
- Magic for Teacher Work Groups
- Prevention and Control of Stress Among Emergency Workers
- Respite Care
- Stress in Teaching
- Supporting Professionals-at-Risk: Evaluating Interventions to Reduce Burnout
- Teacher Burnout in School

Related Agencies and Websites

- About.com: Secondary School Educators: Burnout and Stress Management - Guide Picks
- American Institute of Stress (AIS)
- Center for Anxiety & Stress Treatment
- Information and Tips about Stress and Stress Management
- Stress and Burnout: Resources/Websites
- Teachers Helping Teachers

Relevant Publications That Can Be Obtained at Your Local Library

- Brems, Christiane (2000). Dealing with challenges in psychotherapy and counseling. Wadsworth Publishing Co: Belmont, CA, US, xiv, 321pp.
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of International Research and Practice. Cambridge University Press: England. 300pp.

We hope these resources met your needs. If not, feel free to contact us for further assistance.For additional resources related to this topic, use our search page to find people, organizations, websites and documents. You may also go to our technical assistance page for more specific technical assistance requests.

If you haven't done so, you may want to contact our sister center, the Center for School Mental Health Assistance at the University of Maryland at Baltimore.

If our website has been helpful, we are pleased and encourage you to use our site or contact our Center in the future. At the same time, you can do your own technical assistance with "The fine Art of Fishing" which we have developed as an aid for do-it-yourself technical assistance.

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Shortcut Text	Internet Address
Quick Training Aid	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/burnout_qt/
An Introductory Packet on Understanding and Minimizing Staff Burnout	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/propack.htm#burnout
School Staff Burnout	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/news.htm#volume7(2)
School-Based Mutual Support Groups (For Parents, Staff, and Older Students)	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/support.htm
Volunteers to Help Teachers and School Address Barriers to Learning	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/volunt.htm
Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom-Focused Enabling	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/guidepak.htm#encomp
Enhancing School Culture: Toward a Caring School Culture	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/news.htm#volume3(2)
Collaborative Schools	http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed290233.html
Creating Learning Communities: Models, Resources, and New Ways of Thinking About Teaching and Learning	http://www.great-ideas.org/
Early Childhood Educator - The Breakroom: "Battling Burnout"	http://www.edpsych.com/TeBreak1.html
Fourteen Tips to Help Educators Deal with Stress	http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed308657.html
Organizing Systems to Support Competent Social Behavior in Children and Youth: Volume III, Teacher Stress and Burnout	http://interact.uoregon.edu/wrrc/burnout.html

Shortcut Text	Internet Address
Predicting Teacher Burnout over Time: Effects of Work Stress, Social Support, and Self-Doubts on Burnout and Its Consequences	http://www.fu-berlin.de/gesund/publicat/ehps_cd/health/burke9.htm
Preventing Parent Burn Out: Model for Teaching Effective Coping Strategies to Parents of Children with Learning Disabilities	http://ldonline.com/ld_indepth/parenting/preventburnout.html
Professional Development Newsletter	http://www.ncrel.org/info/notes/wtr02/wtr2002.htm
Reduce Your Losses: Help New Teachers Become Veteran Teachers	http://www.sreb.org/main/highered/ReduceLosses.asp
Spotlight on... Stress, Burnout and Dissatisfaction in School Psychology	http://www.coe.iup.edu/~emlevins/aspp2/index.htm
Staff "Burnout" in Child Care Settings	http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed327296.html
Strategy Brief Series on Teacher Mobility	http://www.nga.org/center/divisions/1,1188,C_ISSUE_BRIEF^D_1524,00.html
Stress Busters: Thoughts to Reduce Your Work Stress!	http://stressrelease.com/strssbus.html
Stress Prevention Tips	http://www.educatorslighthouse.com/EL_Stress_Prevention_Tips7136.html
Survival Guide for New Teachers: How New Teachers Can Work Effectively With Veteran Teachers, Parents, Principals, and Teacher Educators	http://www.ed.gov/pubs/survivalguide/
Teacher Collaboration in Urban Secondary Schools	http://eric-web.tc.columbia.edu/digests/dig93.html
Teacher Tips: Avoiding Burnout & Staying Healthy	http://www.gae.org/teacher/burnout.html

Shortcut Text	Internet Address
Teachers Who Learn, Kids Who Achieve	http://www.wested.org/wested/pubs/online/modelPD/TeachLearn.pdf
Team Teaching	http://www.twoteach.com/teamteaching.htm
Three Stages of Burnout	http://www.texmed.org/cme/phn/psb/burnout.asp
Urban School Restructuring and Teacher Burnout	http://eric-web.tc.columbia.edu/digests/dig75.html
Violence Against Teachers	http://www.neahin.org/mentalhealth/stress.html
Violence in Communities and Schools: A Stress Reduction Guide for Teachers and other School Staff	http://www.neahin.org/mentalhealth/stressguide.htm
Avoiding Burnout: Strategies in Early Childhood Education	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/smhp.exe?ACTION=POPUP&ITEM=2202DOC3
Effective Co-Teaching	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/smhp.exe?ACTION=POPUP&ITEM=2202DOC10
Job Burnout in Public School Education	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/smhp.exe?ACTION=POPUP&ITEM=2202DOC4
Magic for Teacher Work Groups	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/smhp.exe?ACTION=POPUP&ITEM=2202DOC6
Prevention and Control of Stress Among Emergency Workers	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/smhp.exe?ACTION=POPUP&ITEM=2107DOC24
Respite Care	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/smhp.exe?ACTION=POPUP&ITEM=3011DOC6
Stress in Teaching	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/smhp.exe?ACTION=POPUP&ITEM=2202DOC1
Supporting Professionals-at-Risk: Evaluating Interventions to Reduce Burnout	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/smhp.exe?ACTION=POPUP&ITEM=2202DOC5
Teacher Burnout in School	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/smhp.exe?ACTION=POPUP&ITEM=2202DOC2
About.com: Secondary School Educators: Burnout and Stress Management - Guide Picks	http://7-12educators.about.com/cs/burnoutrelief/
American Institute of Stress (AIS)	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/smhp.exe?ACTION=POPUP&ITEM=02142
Center for Anxiety	http://www.stressrelease.com/

Shortcut Text	Internet Address
& Stress Treatment	
Information and Tips about Stress and Stress Management	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/smhp.exe?ACTION=POPUP&ITEM=033170
Stress and Burnout: Resources/Websites	http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/go/edis771/spring99webquests/prof/pannemariecashmere/burnout.h
Teachers Helping Teachers	http://www.pacificnet.net/~mandel/
search	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/search.htm
technical assistance page	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/techreq.htm
Center for School Mental Health Assistance	http://csmha.umaryland.edu/
"The fine Art of Fishing"	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/selfhelp.htm

B. Selected References for Minimizing Staff Burnout

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Understanding and Preventing burn-out. C. Zastrow. British Journal of Social Work, 1984, 14(2):141-155.

III. Brief Research Syntheses Available from the ERIC Clearinghouses

The following is a brief sampling of ERIC Digests (research syntheses) related to Staff Burnout and Burnout Interventions. They are available in libraries, over the Internet, or directly from the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) by phone, 1-800-LET-ERIC.

For information on searching for and accessing ERIC documents over the Internet, see the Internet Resources section of this introductory packet.

1995	http://ericae.net/edo/ED414521.htm	Stress in the Workplace
1991	http://ericae.net/edo/ED340812.htm	Urban School Restructuring and Teacher Burnout
1989	http://ericae.net/edo/ED308657.htm	Fourteen Tips to Help Special Educators Deal with Stress
1987	http://ericae.net/edo/ED291017.htm	Understanding and Managing Stress in the Academic World
1984	http://ericae.net/edo/ED259449.htm	Motivating Teachers for Excellence
1980	http://ericae.net/edo/ED327296.htm	Staff "Burnout" in Child Care Settings

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Risk factors abound in the daily lives of teachers. Three common outcomes of these risk factors are
- stress and burnout
- absenteeism
- attrition

Abstracted points from: # At Risk Teachers

by O. Hammond (Director, Research and Evaluation, PREL) & D. Onikama (Evaluation Specialist, PREL)

[www.prel.org/products/products/atrisk-teacher.pdf]

Stress and Burnout

Research suggests that chief among the symptoms related to teacher stress and burnout are anger, anxiety, depression, fatigue, frustration, resentment towards others, boredom, cynicism, substance abuse, psychosomatic symptoms, marital and family crises, reduction in commitment to students. Studies report that burned-out teachers tend to be

white, male, teaching at the secondary level and with less than 10 years of teaching experience

obsessional, passionate, idealistic and dedicated.

School reform and restructuring have been found to be additional sources of burnout. These include such components as: school-based management, accountability, career ladders, schools within schools, curriculum initiatives, flexible scheduling, and team teaching.

In contrast, some studies focused on working conditions in urban schools suggest that teacher retention (and thus less burnout) is associated with strong, supportive principal leadership, good physical working conditions, high levels of staff collegiality, high levels of teacher influence on school decisions, and high levels of teacher control over curriculum and instruction.

Teacher Absenteeism

A study of teacher absenteeism in secondary education suggests that: "Job satisfaction was the single most important factor affecting attendance motivation. Other employee attitudes that were related to attendance motivation were job involvement, organizational commitment, and loyalty to co-workers." The researchers conclude that: "teachers' attendance is influenced by both organizational practices and by attendance barriers. These barriers include illness, family responsibilities, and transportation problems."

Teacher Attrition

Unsatisfactory working conditions are seen as key to teacher attrition. Teachers report the following as conditions that are of most concern – low salary, lack of promotional opportunities, poor accommodations, lack of upgrading opportunities, and lack of teaching materials and supplies.

How do Risk Factors Generally Relate to Negative Consequences for Teachers?

Identifiable risk factors do not cause negative consequences in a linear, cause and effect relationship. The relationships are cyclical, and what is a cause in one relationship may be an effect in another.

Risk and Outcomes: A Model

Studies that have identified risk factors have also pointed out factors that protect teachers against risk. Thus, there are many potential interventions and actions which an educational system might make to foster these protective factors.

To name just a few:

- *Offer professional development activities.* These might include stress management workshops, relaxation training, and time management. The more holistic approach includes nutrition, exercise and coping skills training.

- *Improve working conditions.* Work with teacher groups to identify and address areas of concern from classroom environment to salary issues.

- *Cultural accommodation.* Look for creative ways to overcome some of the unique cultural risk factors affecting the region.

Note:
Studies that have identified risk factors have also pointed out factors that protect teachers against risk. These include:

- Personal support systems & stress management skills
- Strong administrative support
- Job involvement

Teachers play a primary role in education. Teachers who are at risk place children at risk. It is crucial for the educational system to understand factors that place teachers at risk. It is strongly recommended that educational systems seek ways to foster resiliency factors that may protect teachers and the educational system.

Originals for Overheads

The following can be copied to overhead transparencies to assist in presenting this material.

A. What Causes Burnout?

B. Three Stages of Burnout

C. Promoting Well-Being and Preventing Burnout

D. How Do We Deal with Burnout?

What Causes Burnout?

- **Lack of Control Over One's Destiny**
- **Lack of Occupational Feedback and Communication**
- **Work Overload or Underload**
- **Contact overload resulting from the necessity for frequent encounters with other people in order to carry out job functions.**
- **Role Conflict/Ambiguity (Uncertainty about what one is expected to do at work).**
- **Individual Factors, including financial stability, marital satisfaction, neuroticism, excessive shyness, inflexibility, and poor stress management skills**
- **Training Deficits**
- **Secondary Factors:**
    - **Poor working conditions,**
    - **Lack of job security,**
    - **Lifestyle changes, and**
    - **Rapidly changing society that force individuals to make unexpected adjustments in their way of life and work.**

Excerpts from Job Burnout in Public Education: Symptoms, Causes, and Survival Skills, which was written by Anthony J. Cedoline and published in 1982 by the Teachers College, Columbia University.

Three Stages of Burnout:

Stage 1: Stress Arousal (Any two of the following):

- Persistent irritability
- Persistent anxiety
- Periods of high blood pressure
- Bruxism (grinding teeth at night)
- Insomnia
- Forgetfulness
- Heart palpitations
- Unusual heart rhythms (skipped beats)
- Inability to concentrate
- Headaches

Stage 2: Energy Conservation (Any two of the following):

- Lateness for work
- Procrastination
- Needed three-day weekends
- Decreased sexual desire
- Persistent tiredness in the mornings
- Turning work in late
- Social withdrawal (from friends and/or family)
- Cynical attitudes
- Resentfulness
- Increased coffee/tea/cola consumption
- Increased alcohol consumption
- Apathy

Stage 3: Exhaustion (Any two of the following):

- Chronic sadness or depression
- Chronic stomach or bowel problems
- Chronic mental fatigue
- Chronic physical fatigue
- Chronic headaches
- The desire to "drop out" of society
- The desire to move away from friends, work, and perhaps even family
- Perhaps the desire to commit suicide

Excerpted from the Continuing Medical Education website of the Texas Medical Association
http://www.texmed.org/cme/phn/psb/burnout.asp

Promoting Well-Being and Preventing Burnout

School-based programs should include the following key elements:

1. **Inducting newcomers into the school culture in a welcoming and socially supportive way.**

2. **Opening classroom doors and creating appropriate teams of staff and students who support, nurture, and learn from each other every day.**

3. **Personalized staff development and support, including:**

    - **In-service programs that account for interests strengths, weaknesses and limitations;**

    - **Approaches that overcome avoidance motivation;**

    - **Structure that provides personalized support and guidance; and**

    - **Instruction designed to enhance and expand intrinsic motivation for learning and problem solving.**

4. **Restructuring school governance to enable shared decision-making.**

Excerpted from *Addressing Barriers to Learning, Vol I (7), Num. 2, Spring 2002,* Center for Mental Health in Schools.

How Do We Deal with Burnout?

- **Individuals are capable of learning new coping skills.**
  - Research demonstrates that educational sessions are effective in helping individuals to learn to cope with the demands of their jobs.
- **Changing the job environment, as well as the person in it, is essential for interventions to deal with burnout.**
  - The most effective interventions combine changes in managerial practice with individual-level educational interventions.
- **A combined managerial and educational approach to intervention tends to emphasize building engagement with work.**
  - Focusing on engagement creates an increased alliance with the organizational mission.
  - Work settings which support positive development of energy, vigor, involvement, dedication, absorption, and effectiveness among employees should be successful in promoting their well-being and productivity.

Excerpted from: Maslach, C., Schaufeli, W.B., & Leiter, M.P. (2001). Job Burnout. *Annual Review of Psychology, 52, 397-422.*

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